

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

CONVENTIONS IN PORTUGAL.—There is an irksomeness in beginning to write upon a subject, which has already been fully discussed, more especially when the whole of those, to whom one's remarks are addressed, have made up their minds upon it, and when there appears nothing to be offered in opposition to their opinion. Nevertheless, from the consideration, that the Register may be preserved, owing to its bookish form, somewhat longer than most of the other periodical publications of the political kind, I shall state my opinion of those transactions, which are recorded in the Government Gazette, inserted in another part of this sheet, and which have excited so general a feeling of dissatisfaction.—When we took that view of the situation of affairs in Portugal, which was exhibited to us in the official papers of Sir Arthur Wellesley (inserted at page 407 of this volume); when we beheld the prowess of our soldiers, in the battles, of which those papers speak; when we were told, that the French had, besides the advantage of a perfect knowledge of the country and of long preparation, the still greater advantage of an excellent position whence to make, or where to sustain, an attack; when we were told, just in so many words, that, “in this action, in which *the whole* of the French force in Portugal was employed under the command of the Duke of Abrantes in person, in which the enemy was certainly superior in cavalry and artillery, and in which not more than *half of the British army* was actually engaged, the French sustained a *signal defeat*, and lost thirteen pieces of cannon, twenty-three ammunition waggons, with powder, shells, stores of all descriptions, and twenty thousand rounds of musket ammunition.” When we were told all this, and were informed, that, immediately after this brilliant success, *our army was augmented to nearly double* what it had before been, we naturally expected, that, by the next arrival, seeing that the enemy could receive no supplies, either by land or by sea, we should be informed of his surrender at discretion.—Sir Arthur Wellesley's account has been praised for its *clearness*. I must confess, that I saw nothing like *clearness* in it. I saw no where any explicit

statement respecting the positive amount of the French force in Portugal. The way, in which I, were I a commander upon such an occasion, should proceed, would be this: The enemy had, in this country, such and such forces; they were distributed thus and thus; my force was such and such, and thus and thus was it distributed. Then I should come to an account of my preliminary operations; next to a detail of the engagement; and should conclude with a view of the strength and situation of each party after the engagement. This is the course uniformly pursued by the French in their accounts of their military operations, which, in every quality, except that of falsehood, are well worthy of our imitation, but which, upon this occasion, we have, I am afraid, imitated in the exception and not in the rule.—From such an account, which is too confused to be readable were it not for the sake of the exhilarating substance, one cannot pretend to say what was the exact force of the French in Portugal. Those who have taken the pains to collect the fact from scraps, here and there dispersed, state the French force at fourteen thousand men previous to our attack of them, and at ten thousand men after that attack, which ended in a “signal defeat” on their part. Sir Arthur Wellesley's force was seventeen thousand men. He did not lose a thousand; and, since the battle, he has been joined by other generals and their troops, raising our army to the strength of *thirty thousand* men, or thereabouts.—Well, then, *if it be true*, that Sir Arthur Wellesley, with only *nine thousand* men (the “*half*” of his army), beat “*the whole*” of the French force, in spite of all the advantages enjoyed by the former, of previous local familiarity, long preparation, open retreat, choice of position, and choice of the moment of attack; if this be true, had we not a right to expect, nay, had we not a right to claim and to demand at the hands of the commander in Portugal, when he had thirty thousand men, the capture, or the total destruction, of the remains of the French army in Portugal? Had we not a right to demand at his hands, the sending of Junot and his army prisoners of war to that England which they had so often threatened to invade, or the making of them food for

crows and kites in the land of our ally which they had invaded and laid waste? I have never been eager to encourage the indulgence of sanguine expectations in the people; but, if any nation ever had a right to expect any thing, this nation had a right to expect a result such as I have described.

—Instead of this, what have we? To go through the several articles of these "*Conventions*" would be useless. To be fully sensible of the disgrace which they affix upon us, and of the lasting injury, which we, as well as our allies, must sustain from them, we have only to read them. They speak for themselves in a language too plain to be misunderstood. The short view of them is this: The French had an army in Portugal, which army, though completely masters of the country at first, had so plundered the people and had so outraged their feelings of every kind, that, at last, its situation became perilous, and that, too, at a time, when, from the unexpected resistance of Spain, it became next to impossible for it to receive supplies. We go to the commander of this army, having at our back a force three times as great as his, and having already beaten him with less than a third part of that force, and with him we agree to find shipping to carry him and his army to a place of convenience in France; to carry also, his artillery, his horses, his baggage, his immense plunder, and to take each man and gun so prepared with all requisites as to be able to begin a battle the moment they are landed, and even at sea; to take, lest his baggage or plunder should consist of immoveable articles, the said articles in the way of purchase or exchange; to provide effectually for the security of the persons and property of all those, whether French or Portuguese, who may have taken part with the spoilers, therein engaging to use the forces (sent for the deliverance of Portugal and for the punishment of its plunderers) so as not only to secure impunity to every villain engaged in such plunder, but also to secure to him the legal possession and disposal of what he had thereby acquired, that is to say, if the house and goods of a faithful Portuguese have been confiscated and sold by the French to a traitor, to that traitor we guarantee the quiet enjoyment of such house and goods. Is not this the plain fact? Talk to us of the *surf*, and of the *equinox*. Why, if there had been a mine under you and the match lighted ready to blow you into the air, you ought to have spurned at such conditions; conditions, which you have received at the hands of him whom you, in your bragging

bombast, call a vanquished enemy. Yet, this is not all. As if it were not sufficient for us to be disgraced in the eyes of the world, and for the Portuguese to be injured as much as it was in our power to injure them; as if this were not sufficient, a *pretence* (for it appears to be merely a pretence) is found for our engaging to make "*the Spaniards*," not the Patriots of Spain, not the Spanish Nation, not any thing dignified or honourable, but to make "*the Spaniards*" set at liberty, "*restore*," as if they had stolen them, all "*the French subjects*" detained in Spain and not taken in battle. That is to say, all the horde of spies, intriguers, fomenters of discord, plunderers and cut-throats, who have been the principal cause of all that the people of Spain have suffered, and who are held in durance, not only because they are capable of still doing mischief, but, doubtless, as a security for the lives of such Spaniards as may, without being taken in arms, fall, or have fallen, into the hands of the French. What right had we, and that too without reference to *numbers* of persons, to make any such stipulation with respect to Spain? Whose authority had we for it? By what instrument had the people of Spain placed their honour and their safety in the hands of our "*Chevaliers du bain*?" What *power* have we to cause such a stipulation to be fulfilled? The promise is like that which a man makes when a foot-pad has him down and holds a knife across his throat. Did the men who made this promise *beat* the Duke d'Abrantes; or were they like the curs, who, having felt the bite of the mastiff, lose all confidence in their numbers, and, though they bark victory, suffer him to retire in quiet, carrying off his bone to be disposed of at his leisure? No: not so, for they complaisantly carry the bone for him.—The naval yields, in no respect, to the military convention. The Emperor Alexander, who is carrying on a desperate and blood-thirsty war against our really faithful and very brave ally, the king of Sweden, had, with a view of co-operating with the French in their project for "*restoring the liberty of the seas*," or, in other words, destroying the maritime predominance of England, sent a fleet round into the Tagus. For the return of this fleet to Russia, the priests of the Greek church have been saying *mass* and burning incense any time these nine months past. Our "*Chevaliers du bain*" seem to have been penetrated with the supplications and offerings which had hitherto been used in vain; and, though they did not send the fleet home; though they

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were not quite so far over-awed by the Duke d'Abrantes as to raise the blockade and to let the fleet come out and go home, they took care to stipulate, that the officers and men of the fleet should be immediately carried back to Russia, without any impediment to their being at once employed to fight against us, or against our ally the king of Sweden; that all this should be done at our expense, and that we should take care of the ships, so as to have them to deliver up at the conclusion of the peace. The Eastern warrior, Sir Arthur Wellesley, had, in his part of the negociation, agreed to let ships and all go home; but, then, there was the chance, at least, of their meeting with an English fleet at sea. This chance, however, was small; for, the start which he had allowed them, would have enabled them to make a French port before our fleet off the Tagus could overtake them; they might, too, have fallen in with some of our detached ships, who could be in expectation of no such event; and, in any case, a meeting with them might have cost us lives worth more than those of all the "Chevaliers du bain" that ever existed. It must, therefore, be confessed, that what was finally agreed to was a little less bad and less disgraceful than what the conqueror of the Sabab Vizier of Oude had, as far as he was empowered, made an article of the famous convention. — But, besides the heretofore unheard-of title and language of his naval agreement, where were the circumstances that could justify it? The fleet was completely in our power. There was scarcely a possibility of their escaping. In a few weeks, unless cowardice seized our army, the batteries, under which the fleet must have been in our hands. Or, whether they were or not, the fleet could not escape. Sir Charles Cotton, therefore, as culpable as Sir Hew Dalrymple and Sir Arthur Wellesley: for, though he did not agree to the terms at first proposed, he agreed to terms very disgraceful to us and injurious to our allies. "The *surf* and the approaching *equinox*!" Shades of all the thousands and hundreds of thousands of English seamen, who, without a millionth part of the motive, have perished in braving the waves and the winds and the shoals and the rocks, come forth from the deep and hear this! "The *surf* and the *equinox*!" Why, it is like the language of the chicken-hearted secretary of Charles II, who, letting drop the pen, upon part of the room being torn away by a cannon-ball, and being asked by the king why he did not proceed, exclaimed, in a trembling

voice, "the *ball*, your Majesty!" "Well," said the king, "and what of the *ball*? The *ball* said nothing about your writing." In a man like this, strong apprehension at danger so very imminent was not only excusable but naturally to be expected; but, to hear commanders of British forces, by sea as well as land, pleading the *surf* and the *equinox* as an excuse for having assented to terms *confessedly* not such as could have been wished for, is enough to fill the nation with anger approaching to madness. — There was, Dalrymple says, doubts whether Sir John Moore's division could be safely landed at that season of the year; but, it appears, that these doubts were not founded, because they were safely landed *before* the Convention was signed. But, suppose it had been *certain* that they could *not* be landed? Wellesley (for it is time to have done with *long* names) had, as he says, beaten the *whole* of the French force with *one half* of his, and his army had received an augmentation *before* Sir John Moore arrived. What, then, had the landing of Sir John Moore's division to do with the matter? Indeed, it would seem to have been better for him not to land, but to wait for orders from home. At any rate, however, landed he was before the convention was signed, so that the excuse is completely nullified. — Then comes the excuse about provisions. "It was doubted, whether the *supply* of so large an army with *provisions* from the ships could be *provided* for, under all the disadvantages to which the shipping *were* exposed." The Knight's grammar is, to say the least of it, quite equal to his logic. What, then, it would seem, that here was an army sent to Portugal, without due precautions taken as to finding it in food? For, observe, the difficulties and dangers of the seas are, upon such occasions, always taken into view at the war-office and the admiralty. But now, we are, it seems, to be told, that, after all the immense expense of this armament; after an expense of preparation such as never was heard of before for such an enterprise; after all this, we are to be very coolly told, that there were doubts as to the *possibility* of supplying the army with food, even for a *fortnight* or *three weeks*! Let us see: there were, after Sir John Moore landed, about thirty thousand men. Could not these men have been fed for a fortnight or three weeks, without producing a famine in Portugal, even supposing it impossible to get any thing at all from the ships? Can Dalrymple say, that there was not already a week or ten days' provision in the army? It will be proved, I think, that there was,

But, upon the very face of the thing, this excuse is worth nothing. They were in a friendly country; they wanted no force for foraging, or for obtaining accommodations of every sort; the sea was not only open to them, but they had the exclusive possession of all its shores; if the "surf" prevailed to-day, or this week, why, it would not continue for ever, and, when it ceased, any flour or other provisions that might have been got from the Portuguese, could have been returned with interest, for, it is not pretended, that there was not an abundance on board the ships. But, how did the Duke D'Abrantes, as Wellesley calls him (for the first time that any Englishman has called him so); how did the Duke D'Abrantes, to call whom by that title was a cruel insult to the oppressed and plundered Portuguese; how did Wellesley's Duke D'Abrantes make shift to get provisions, not only for the "fortnight or three weeks" to come; not only as long as he might remain besieged; but how had he made shift to find provisions for many months before, and that, too, let it be observed, *without the possibility of any communication with the sea?* The Duke D'Abrantes, a title taken from a city and territory of Portugal, and which Wellesley acknowledges to be his due; the Duke D'Abrantes had fourteen thousand men, about a thousand horses, and, probably, about six or seven thousand men, on board the Russian fleet and other ships; all these Wellesley's Duke D'Abrantes made shift to provide with every thing, *and to lay up stores for a siege*, and that, too, amongst a people decidedly hostile to him, and all this in that very country, where our "Chevaliers du bain" were under mortal apprehensions of being starved to death from the mere hostility of the surf, though they had a friendly people to apply to, a sea always open, and an England at the distance of ten days' sail.—Dalrymple will hardly pretend, that Junot had collected *all* the provisions of the country and carried them to his "strong position." But, "they were become scarce." May be so. But, will any man believe, that, just at the end of harvest, or indeed, at any time, provisions for such an army for a few weeks, might not have been *borrowed* in Portugal, where our inclination to, and our means of, repayment were so well known? What avail these, our reputation and our means, if they were not to be resorted to upon an occasion like this? Is it not notorious that there are other ports in Portugal besides Lisbon; that into these ports we could have entered; that our means of conveyance, in all manner of

vehicles, was so great as to leave nothing to fear upon that score; and, would the Portuguese have wanted any thing but the simple promise of repayment to induce them to afford our army ample supplies of provisions, as to the *kind* of which there could have been no difficulty to apprehend, seeing that the position of our army must necessarily have remained nearly the same? So that, view it in whatever light we please, this excuse about provisions appears to be the most futile ever made by mortal man.—The great plea, however; that upon which the "Chevaliers du bain" mean to make their stand, appears to be that of *gaining time*. So eager were they to be in Spain, that they thought nothing at all of Portugal. Their capacious minds, accustomed to travel over the vast regions of the East, were impatient under the confinement to a little plot of land on the shores of the Atlantic. Now, as to *gaining time*, if that is to be considered as a positive good, then one way of obtaining it is to decamp; and, if they had shipped off, if they had not caught a Tartar in Wellesley's Duke D'Abrantes, they would certainly have gained time, though they would, it must be confessed, have left Portugal just as they found it, except that the land would have been enriched with the bodies and the blood of some of the bravest of their countrymen. Well, then, this gaining of time may be an *evil*; and now let us see what it was in this case.—Dalrymple says: "my opinion in favour of the Convention was principally founded" [not *founded principally*, and I wish he had set Junot at defiance as much as he does sense] "on the great importance of time, which the season of the year rendered peculiarly valuable, and which the enemy could easily have consumed in the protracted defence of the strong places they occupied, had the terms of Convention been refused them." *Terms of Convention*, Sir Knight, is a new phrase, invented, I presume, to avoid the assertion, that the terms of the convention were the only terms that the Duke would accept of at your hands. But, to continue in proceeding backwards, in the examination of this excuse, on what is founded the assertion, the *unqualified* assertion, that Junot could easily have consumed time in a protracted defence? Is it founded upon your knowledge, or your opinion, that he had plentiful stores of provisions for his men, horses, and fleet, supplies got in a country wherein you were afraid of starving? Or, did you apprehend that he would be able to obtain supplies in defiance of Cotton's fleet, your army, and the universal hatred and hostility of the peo-

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le of the whole of Portugal? "*Strong*
places?" I never before heard of any in
Portugal. Had you been before Lisle, Bris-
ac, or Maestricht, you could not have
written in language more desponding, even
if the country around had been filled with
your enemy's friends and adherents. Had
you not battering cannon? Had you not an
ample portion of artillery, the best constituted
and the best supplied in Europe; an abun-
dant of ammunition of all sorts; a large
fleet to apply to for aid of every description;
your word to pass as current as gold and
silver for the hire of labour, materials and
implements of every kind; were you not as
well situated, in every respect, as if you had
had to carry on a siege of Dover? And yet,
you talk of strong places, *easily* defended
to a protracted duration. The question now
comes: *since when* did these places become
so very strong? Junot found no difficulty in
getting into them, when he entered Portugal
with that same army, which Wellesley told
us, he had beaten hollow, only a few days
before you made the convention; nay, he
marched into them, or, rather, over them.
They have been very quick, then, it seems,
in growing into places of such adamantine
materials.—Well, now for *the time* that
was to be gained. You do not tell us what
good purpose that time was to answer; but,
some person, who has taken upon him your
defence, has suggested it to the public in the
following words, to which the Courier news-
paper says it is "*desired* to give insertion."
Now, then, let us see this great purpose that
you had in view in this sacrifice of honour
to the gaining of time.—"The public
seem much disappointed that the terms
of capitulation granted Junot and his
forces have been so disadvantageous to our
interests, and perhaps justly, were it not
that there might have been some *secret*
motives and *very strong ones*: supposing,
for instance, Junot had possession of a
strong post, and it was doubtful if he
might not have defended it for a fortnight,
three weeks, or a month, or *perhaps*
much longer, was it no object to gain that
time in the situation that Spain is, with
reinforcements pouring down from all
quarters of France, to strengthen the
enemy in Biscay and Navarre, and to
have a disposeable force so large as that
which would otherwise be employed in
Portugal, to throw into the assistance of
the Spaniards in that quarter? Were
they able by our assistance to drive the
enemy beyond the passes of the Pyren-
nees, before he has time to collect his
forces, would not that be a greater object

"in the ultimate success of the war, and
does it not materially add to the proba-
bility of doing this by assisting them with
this force three weeks or a month sooner
than we could have done had we not *accept-*
ed of the terms so complained of as *grant-*
ed to Junot."—Mark here; we *accept* of
terms in one line, and *grant* them in the
next. No, no. The "*Chevaliers du bain*"
did not grant. They accepted, and in that
sort of way in which an apprentice boy
accepts of a Monday morning's threatening,
while the strap or the walking-stick is shak-
ken over his shoulders.—So, these heroes
might have their *secret* motives? They
might want to get into Spain to stop the
progress of the armies of Napoleon? But,
would it not have been as well to send Junot
and his army and the Russian fleet to
England first, with a request to be ordered
to march into Spain; for, even now we
shall see, that the army will be able to leave
Portugal very little sooner than they would,
if they had waited the result of a siege of
even a month's duration, while there appear
no grounds for believing, that the siege could
have lasted for a week, under the direction
of brave and skilful assailants.—This
is the least part of the objection, how-
ever; for, the army of Junot, an army
so formidable as to produce the conven-
tion that we have been examining, is
to be landed precisely at that point,
whence they can most easily march
into Spain; and so, finding ourselves unable
to dislodge him from a place where we were
certain of capturing him and preventing the
possibility of his doing further mischief ei-
ther to Spain or Portugal, we let him loose,
in order to have the *chance* of beating him
in the Pyrennees. No, not so: we do not
let him loose; we carry him round at our
proper expence; we carry all his arms,
horses, baggage, plunder, and we put him
down in a condition, not only to march off
to Spain, but we fill even his pouches with
sixty rounds each, that he may be ready in-
stantly to begin the battle.—Besides, is it
not evident, that, though Portugal is eva-
cuated, it must still, in a certain degree, be
left to our defence. Can the *whole* of our
army quit Portugal instantly? Can that
country, in the state in which it now is, be
left without from ten to twenty thousand
English troops? We shall see that it can-
not; and we shall see, that we have carried,
in Junot's army, more men to fight against
Spain, than we can send from Portugal to
the assistance of the Spanish People.—If
this be so, where shall we find words to ex-
press our indignation at this pitiful plea of

gaining time, when we take into view the other part of the Convention, which makes us carry, at our expence, five or six thousand Russian seamen to fight against the Swedes; when we reflect on the vast means of conveyance and of acceleration, in every way, that we lose by the employment of our ships of war and transports in carrying home the Russians and the French; and when we consider how much more ten thousand of the conquerors of Junot would have been worth in Spain than twenty thousand of those who have purchased his return home with sacrifices so great? What we wanted, what our allies wanted, what the general cause wanted, was, not a month sooner possession of the fortresses of Portugal, but a signal defeat, a humiliation, of a part of Napoleon's army. We wanted an instance of triumph, a proof of victory, which no one could gainsay. We wanted the boasting threateners of invasion brought hither; we wanted Junot and his army in England, and to hear our commanders say to the people: "There are your invaders, go and look at them." This is what we wanted. This would have spoken conviction to the minds of Englishmen, of Frenchmen, of our Allies, and of the whole world. This is what true policy dictated; this is what would, at once, have presented itself to a high and enlightened mind, though it appears never, for one moment, to have entered the mind of either our generals or our admiral. Such an example, such an irrefragable proof, of the great power of England, would have given her such consequence in the world; would have placed her so high in the opinion of all mankind, that it is impossible for a man who loves his country not to hate those who have prevented its existence. In speaking of the victories in Portugal, I reckoned (at page 386) amongst its consequences, this: "that it would diminish that dread, in which the French arms had been so long held in other nations, and particularly in the Southern parts of Europe." But, this miserable Convention, dictated to us in terms so haughty and insolent, and in which we recognize the title of Emperor and King in Napoleon, will not only undo all that was done by those victories, but will confirm that dread which it was so great an object to remove; for, to what cause, other than that of a conviction of a decided superiority in the French armies, can this convention possibly be ascribed? And, after this, after seeing us thus act; after seeing us so shamefully betray the interests of our allies of Portugal and Sweden; after seeing us make a convention, in which all the dearest interests

of the Portuguese were so deeply involved, without even consulting any one of the Portuguese commanders or chiefs, who can be weak enough to believe, that the Spaniards will trust a British commander? If they imbibe a distrust of us, and that they must is but too evident, who knows what effect that may have upon their councils; how many it may cause to waver, who would otherwise be firm; how many it may lead to abandon the contest; in how many ways it may operate in favour of Buonaparte's plan of subjugation? Never can we expect such another opportunity of turning the tide of the war. The power of doing this was put completely in our hands; that power we have most shamefully thrown away, and we must take the consequences of such foolish and dastardly conduct. — The sorry lives of those, who have thus disgraced our country, and ruined our cause, would do us no good. They would not restore to this world one of the brave men who fell in acquiring the means of terminating the war in Portugal with so much honour and advantage as might have met in its termination, nor would they restore to the pockets of us at home the immense sums which have been, in that war, expended for a mischievous purpose; but, no one will deny, that something ought to be done; that law and justice, in some shape or other, ought to call these commanders before them. Whitelocke suffered (slightly indeed) for his silliness, or his cowardice, or both together; but, he was beaten, at any rate. He did stop till he was beaten, before he signed terms, to which none but a beaten army could submit. These commanders have not waited for that imperious cause of submission. They have volunteered in disgrace. They have made a sacrifice of their country's honour and interests, without being able to set up the smallest plea of necessity. Whitelocke's expedition was a thing of dubious importance. There were many, among whom I was one, who thought that all that there was to regret in his failure was the mere loss of lives. But, here was an object of such vast consequence, and of a nature so unequivocal, that it was impossible for any man, having only a common feeling for the honour of his country, not to have it deeply at heart. Every man seemed to say, every countenance bespoke the sentiment: "Now is the time; we are now striking the blow, that is to fix the character of our country, and that is to be the source of noble emulation in the hearts of our children's children." This blow our gallant countrymen had proved that they were able to strike; their sword

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was uplifted, and, at the moment when they were about to let it fall, their arm is unnerved, and those whom their valour destined to be the captives of their country, may now become its plundering invaders.—With respect to this enterprize there was an unanimity of sentiment, a cordiality of wishes, an absence of party feeling, such as I do not recollect to have witnessed upon any former occasion. Amongst us, who have opportunities of addressing the public in print, there was not a man, as far as I could perceive, who did not discover great anxiety for the result, and who did not join in hearty applause as far as applause was due, of both the commanders and the ministers. Such is the unanimity and such the feeling of *disapprobation* now; and, while I do not wish to insinuate that the ministers have any desire to withhold justice from the nation, I must express my opinion, that, if they were to make the attempt, they would be guilty of an act of insolence so outrageous, that, if the people were to bear it, they would deserve to be swept from the face of the earth.—Leaving the responsibility of the War-Secretary as a subject for future discussion, the only point, upon which, at present, there appears to be any difference of opinion, is this: *whether Wellesley is a participator with Dalrymple, or not?* The negative has been strongly insisted upon by the numerous, the powerful, the active, and the audacious friends of the former, who, after having used their influence for the purpose of obtaining detached paragraphs in the newspapers, beginning with an assertion that he was at *forty miles distance* when the armistice was signed, have at last, in the Morning Post newspaper, found a person, who, in his capacity of editor, has inserted, *as his own*, a defence evidently written by some one closely connected with the person defended.—Now, then, let us see what this defence is made of.—The pretended editor sets out with a few silly remarks upon the measures themselves; but, very quickly comes to the chief, and, indeed, the only, object of his writing, thus:—“Here it becomes us to consider who are the persons responsible. The responsibility attaches to his majesty’s ministers on the one hand, and the commander of the forces on the other. It is presumable that when ministers sent such an immense force to Portugal as near 37,000 men, their object was to enable the general to whom they gave the command, completely to reduce the enemy, and compel them to surrender; and if they have not limited and tied up

“their general, but left him to obtain those terms which the greatness of his force intitled him to demand, they are totally unimpeachable. It is, therefore, on the commander of the forces, that the whole responsibility remains. Both the Conventions, though the one was signed by Sir Arthur Wellesley, and the other by Col. Murray, are to be considered as the work of Sir Hew Dalrymple, and of Sir Hew Dalrymple alone. The commander-in-chief of an army is alone responsible to the nation for what is done by the army. He acts under the king’s orders, and all the army under their commander’s orders. The supposing any other principle, the supposing that there was a separate responsibility in any part or member of an army from that of its commander-in-chief, would be to set up distinct commands and authorities, and would justify division and mutiny. Supposing Col. Murray’s name had been subscribed to the first Convention, would any man have considered Col. Murray as responsible for the treaty? No; he would have considered Col. Murray as merely ministerial, and as giving authentication to the dictates of his commander. Upon what principle then is Sir A. Wellesley to be esteemed responsible, if Col. Murray would not have been so? Had Sir A. Wellesley a distinct, separate, independent authority to make Conventions with the enemy? Could he take a measure, or agree to an expression of his own, without the commander-in-chief’s approbation? Could he have modelled an article, proposed a condition, or insisted on a principle, which the commander-in-chief did not sanction? Could he have refused to have let the treaty in all its parts have been managed and worded as the commander-in-chief pleased? It is obvious, he had no such power. It is clear, then, that, as to the Convention, whether he proved or disapproved of it, whether he negotiated every line, or never read a word of it, he is in no sense whatsoever responsible. Sir H. Dalrymple was commander of the forces; in him alone all discretion, all authority was placed, and on him alone all responsibility rests. But it is said, if Sir A. Wellesley did not approve the Convention he ought not to have signed it. Is it meant by this, that when an inferior general officer differs in opinion with his commander, he is to disobey him? Or if he obeys, is he to couple that obedience with a public dis-

“ play of his disapprobation? An inferior general will often cheerfully acquiesce in the decision of his superior, when perhaps, were he himself commander-in-chief, he would act very differently. This flows from the very nature of two situations, the commander and the commanded. The latter not being responsible for his opinions will not be tenacious of them; he will easily submit to the decision of his superior, because his acquiescence neither leads to censure nor to praise, nor is he vested with responsibility, or liable to examination or trial. With regard to Sir A. Wellesley's opinion, it is known, that if his advice had been followed on the 21st, he would have pursued the routed army of Junot, and never have let him rest till he had destroyed it. When the line of pursuing the enemy was dropped, and negociation admitted, he was then superseded in command, and had only to follow the plans of Sir Hew Dalrymple, for he had no plans of his own to follow. This subject, however, lies in a short compass. Can Sir A. Wellesley be *brought to trial*, for signing a Convention according to the instructions of his commanding general? He cannot. How absurd then to impute blame to an officer, for an obedience to the invariable rules of discipline, and for his submission to which it is not possible he can be *brought to trial*!—I can go no farther.—What! The Wellesleys; the high Wellesleys; the haughty Wellesleys, accept of this Old-Bailey-like defence! This worse than any defence ever set up by pinioned caitiff, tutored by attorney that ought to have been hanged as many times as he has hairs upon his head! What! “Ah! you may say what you like, but you cannot *take the law* of him. He is not indictable. There is a flaw in your proceedings. His head is safe from the noose!” Why, if there be any thing that can add to the just indignation and resentment of the public, it is a defence like this. “You cannot get hold of him: you cannot *bring him to trial*!” I appeal to the reader, whether he ever heard, or read, of any thing so base as this.—Yes, there is a very wide difference indeed between Wellesley and Murray. The latter was merely the agent of the commander-in-chief; he was a field officer, and had no command in the army; he was not one of those who would be *consulted* as to what ought to be done, or who would be called into a council of war. Whereas the former

ed, to be one of a council of war, but he had had the previous command; he had been commander-in-chief until but a few hours before he entered upon the negociation of the armistice; he was in possession of all the local knowledge, of all the knowledge relative to the force and condition of the enemy, that was possessed in our army; and, of course, if he agreed to, or sanctioned by his signature, what was injurious to his country, he was, and must be held to be responsible for the act; or, at least, must come in for his full share of the responsibility.—Great pains, the reader will perceive, is taken to produce the belief, that Wellesley was a mere instrument; a thing having no will of its own; a machine moved by the great Dalrymple; and, in a subsequent part of the article above quoted, the writer says, that he was no more responsible “than an attorney's or banker's clerk would be for signing an obligation of his master.” Oh! the gentle, the submissive, the humble-minded Wellesley! Well, this man, whenever he dies, ought to be preserved in pickle; for such a Wellesley I never heard of before. “An attorney's or banker's clerk!” This is a defence well worthy of him who signed the armistice with General Kellerman.—But, come, let us see to what point this doctrine of automaton submission would carry us. The proposition is this: that an officer, inferior in command, is not, and cannot become responsible, for any thing, be it what it may, which he does by the command of his superior, if the thing done be not contrary to “the *articles of war*.” Articles of war! Oh, shame! So then, because the express statute cannot be cited against him, he is to be holden up as an innocent man! But, to illustrate the effect of this doctrine, suppose Dalrymple were to order Wellesley to shoot the king. Would not the latter, as well as the former, be hanged for high treason? Well, then, there are things which an inferior may not do at the command of his superior; yet, the shooting of the king is nowhere expressly prohibited “in the *articles of war*.” Suppose, in the armistice, it had been agreed upon to surrender the whole of the British army, in Portugal, to Junot, at discretion. Would not every one of the generals, nay every colonel or commander of a corps, who should have obeyed an order to fulfil such an agreement, have been shot, in a few days after his landing in England? Yet, there is, in the “*articles of war*,” nothing expressly forbidding such surrender. Both these supposed acts, and all other acts contrary to the honour and interests of the country, are

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forbidden in the engagement of fidelity, and in the articles relating to the faithful discharge of duty; but they are nowhere expressly pointed out. The real question is, then, whether the agreeing to the armistice was, or was not, an act, which, to every rational mind, must have manifestly appeared to be detrimental to the nation. If this question be decided in the negative, then, not only Wellesley, but all the parties concerned are innocent; but, if it be decided in the affirmative, they are all guilty, and he the *most* guilty, because he, who alone could possibly be well acquainted with all the local and other circumstances, was the first to set his hand to the agreement. —The writer of this defence says, in another place, that very great mischief might have arisen from an open rupture between our commanders. In the plural, observe, though, but a moment before, we had been told, that there was but *one* commander. We are told, that if Wellesley had publicly declared his disapprobation of the terms of the agreement, “the discord, which must have ensued between him and the commander-in-chief would have unquestionably embarrassed all the future operations of the army.” What! the disapprobation of so mild, so gentle, so unassuming, so humble, so submissive a thing as an “attorney’s or banker’s clerk”! Could this thing’s disapprobation have embarrassed all the operations of an army, under a chief whose nod was law? Incredible! No; we cannot be made to believe, that a *machine*, though composed of flesh and blood, or of flesh and bones rather, could have produced any embarrassment in the operations of an army. If it stood in his way, Sir Hew (what a name!) could have put it into an arm chest, or thrust it into any hole or corner, and amongst any of the dead stock of the army. When a man has a bad cause; when he is put to the *inventing* of reasons, he is pretty sure to contradict himself. —Hitherto I have proceeded upon the supposition, that Wellesley really did no more than obey the orders of Dalrymple; that the latter was the great mover in the affair; and that the former only aided and assisted. The contrary, however, I think, clearly appears to have been the fact; but, first let us hear what further this famous defender has to say. —“Sir Arthur Wellesley, in fact, *privately* protested against the armistice in the strongest terms; he distinctly declared his objections to the commander-in-chief, and tried all in his power to prevent him from granting the terms he did to the

“enemy. Sir A. Wellesley neither approved, nor had any concern whatever in writing the armistice: it was negotiated with Kellermann by Sir H. Dalrymple himself (indeed it was dictated and written in French by Kellermann), and was afterwards signed by Sir A. Wellesley, *in obedience to the positive order of Sir H. Dalrymple the commander-in-chief.*—It is a curious fact, not unworthy of remark, that Sir H. Dalrymple had intended in the first instance to affix his own signature to the armistice; but that he refrained from doing so, and ordered Sir A. Wellesley to sign it, at the instigation of the French general, whose views in such a requisition it does not require much penetration to discover. Sir A. Wellesley therefore is no more responsible for the terms of the armistice, than col. Murray is for the terms of the Convention; or to carry the comparison still further, than an attorney or banker’s clerk would be for signing an obligation of his master. It has been urged, that Sir A. Wellesley might have told the commander-in-chief, that he would sooner go into arrest than put his name to such an instrument, but under the firmest conviction in his own mind (which, if coolly considered, will be found to be the simple fact), that he was merely acting under the positive orders of the commander-in-chief, he signed it as he would have done any other military order which did not appear to him to be contrary to the articles of war, or the established laws of his country, in preference to commencing open hostilities with his commander-in-chief —the very day after he superseded him. Sir A. Wellesley’s refusal to sign the armistice, would by no means have prevented the conclusion of it, but the discord which must have ensued between him and the commander-in-chief would have unquestionably embarrassed all the future operations of the army. These are *strong facts*; but they are most substantially and literally true, and perfectly corroborated by numerous letters from the most distinguished officers of the British army in Portugal. These letters also all agree in stating, that Sir A. Wellesley most distinctly declared his opinion that the expediency of permitting the French to capitulate at all, was occasioned solely by the dilemma into which the army had been brought by its being prevented, contrary to his plans and wishes repeatedly urged, from following up the victory of the 21st,

“ in which case, the whole French army
 “ must inevitably have been destroyed,
 “ instead of being enabled by *that fatal delay*
 “ to retreat to the passes, and to concen-
 “ trate themselves in forts in their rear,
 “ which it might consume *the whole of the*
 “ *winter months to beat them out of.* At
 “ the conclusion of the action of the 21st,
 “ the head quarters of the French at
 “ Torres Vedras were four miles nearer to
 “ the right wing of the English army,
 “ which had not been engaged, than to the
 “ French defeated army, in consequence of
 “ Junot’s having exclusively attacked our
 “ centre and left wing. It therefore amounts
 “ almost to a certainty, that if Sir A. Wel-
 “ lesley had been permitted to push forward
 “ agreeably to his plan and request, he
 “ must inevitably have arrived before them,
 “ occupied their posts, and annihilated
 “ them as an army.”—There is, after
 this, a crying paragraph about “ *party ani-*
 “ *mosity,*” than which charge nothing ever
 was more false, as every man in the country
 will testify.—So, here, the few weeks of
 Sir Hew are swelled out into “ the whole
 “ of the winter months ”! And where was
 Junot to find *provisions* for the whole of the
 winter months? Were his army and his
 horses and his fleet to be fed by ravens; or
 had they collected food sufficient, in that
 very country where our fine commanders
 were afraid of being starved in a week
 or two?—So, if Wellesley had been *per-*
 mitted to go on, he would have destroyed the
 French army. Now, *who* prevented him?
 His victory was won on the 21st of August.
 Sir Harry (another slang name!) tells us,
 that though he arrived while the battle was
 going on, he left all to Wellesley; and Wel-
 lesley’s friends in England took special care
 to inform the public, that he, and he alone,
 had the claim to the merit. Accordingly,
 those who express their joy and approbation
 by the use of the bottle, drank “ the brave
 “ Sir Arthur Wellesley and his army.” No-
 body’s name was heard of but his. Sir Bur-
 rard did not pretend to have any share in the
 merit, and we gave him credit for his mo-
 desty. Well, then, *who* stopped Wellesley?
 Who prevented him from “ *pushing on?*”
 The Duke D’Abrantes. That cruel Tartar.
 It was he, or it was nobody, that so suddenly
 arrested the progress of our dashing “ Cheva-
 “ lier du bain.” For only look at the *dates*,
 which are always very troublesome things,
 when men have to lie through a cause. Who,
 upon reading what I have quoted above,
 would not suppose, that a month, or, at
 least, many days, had elapsed between the
 battle of the 21st and the signing of the ar-

mistice; seeing that, before the latter took
 place, the French had had time “ to retreat
 “ to the *passes*, and to *concentrate* them-
 “ selves in the strong forts?” Who would
 not suppose, that several days, at least,
 had elapsed? But, the fact is, that the
 battle was fought on the 21st, and the
 armistice agreed upon and signed on the 22d.
 There could not possibly be any more than
twenty four hours between the battle and the
 armistice; and, observe, Sir Burrard left
 Wellesley to do as he pleased on the 21st; he
 had all the then army under his command; he
 might have gone on if he would; and his
 stupid defender, appearing to forget these
really strong and undeniable facts, calls the
 21st a *fatal day*.—Now, as to poor Sir
 Hew, when did he come upon the
 stage? Not till the 22d; not till the day
 after “ *the fatal day* ;” not, to use his own
 words, till “ a *few hours* before general
 “ Kellerman came.” So that, it is, I think,
 as clear as day-light, that Wellesley was
 controuled by nobody, that he was held back
 by nobody; that he was, as to all practical
 purposes, the commander-in-chief, until the
 very moment of General Kellerman’s arrival,
 and that, as he has had all the praise, so he
 is entitled, to all the blame for whatever, de-
 serving blame, took place previous to that
 moment.—There remains now to be no-
 ticed; what this defender says about *private*
 protests and *private* letters. He asserts, that
 Wellesley privately protested against the ar-
 mistice, and that Dalrymple turned a deaf
 ear to his advice. Against this assertion,
 which is quite bare of all authority, let us
 put the probabilities of the case. And, I ask
 the reader; I put it to the plain good sense
 of the public, whether it be probable, or
 hardly possible, that Sir Dalrymple, who
 had arrived at head quarters but a few
 hours, and who had been in the country
 not many hours; who could know little, or
 nothing, of local circumstances or of other
 circumstances to be taken into considera-
 tion; who was a person of no great fame,
 and who carried with him no other weight
 than that of his mere rank: I put it to an
 impartial public, whether it was probable,
 whether it was possible, that this man,
 should, under such circumstances, come in
 with his boots on, and his hands and face un-
 washed, and take, not only the actual ope-
 rative command upon him, but take up the
 pen, before he sat down to eat or to drink,
 and settle, upon his own unassisted opinion,
 an agreement which was to determine the
 fate of the whole of the enemy’s army and
 fleet; that he should do this, not only with-
 out advice, but against the advice and the

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solemn protest of one notoriously the favourite of the ministers, notoriously backed by a host of powerful friends at home in and out of parliament, and not less notoriously of no very unassuming disposition, especially on the morrow of his gaining a brilliant victory; that he, a prudent old man, should not deign to consult with, but should reject the advice of such a person, nay, and make him, like an attorney's or banker's clerk, set his hand to, as being the negociator of, terms penned by the French General, and against which hateful terms he had made a solemn protest; I put it to the sense of any man who hears me, whether this be possible? Away, then, with all the lies about private protests and private letters. There is no proof produced of the existence of any such protest; while there is the strongest presumptive proof, that no such protest ever was made. Besides, have we not the internal evidence of Dalrymple's dispatch? What does the old gentleman say? Why: "As I landed in Portugal entirely unacquainted with the actual state of the French army, and many circumstances of a local and incidental nature, which, DOUBTLESS, had great weight in deciding the question, my OWN opinion in favour of expelling the French army from Portugal, by means of the Convention, was, such and such." Why this "doubtless?" He does not pretend to have had a decided opinion of *his own*. Would he have thus spoken, if he had despised the protest of Wellesley? The thing is not to be believed by even the most credulous and most stupid of mankind; and I beseech the honest part of the public, I beseech all those who feel for the honour of their abused country, to be upon their guard against the arts of that sink of falsehood and corruption, which is now stirring to its very entrails for the purpose of misleading the public mind and palsying the arm of justice.—"Private letters from the army" have been trumped up, and published without signatures; it was stated, in several of the papers, that, when the armistice was signed, Wellesley was *at the distance of forty miles from head quarters*; but, there are two facts, which I am particularly anxious to impress upon the minds of my readers; the first of which is, that the Morning Post news-paper, in which has appeared the dirty defence of Wellesley, was, in the autumn of 1806, the property of a company of persons, chiefly *East Indians*, and that Mr. Paull having accused one of these persons, a man who had been high in office under Lord Wellesley, of causing certain articles to be

put in that paper against him, the person so accused, whose name was ROBINSON, and who lived in Devonshire Place, acknowledged, in a letter to Mr. Paull that *he was a part proprietor*, which letter I saw and read. I have not heard, that the paper has changed proprietors, and my firm belief is, that it has not.—The second fact is, that, in the Gazette Extraordinary, containing the documents relating to the late transactions in Portugal, that document, that most important document of all, *the armistice*, which was signed by, and which was evidently the work of, Wellesley, was inserted in the *French language*, unaccompanied with a translation, while all the other documents, to none of which his name and seal were affixed, were inserted in *English* only; a thing as unprecedented as the motive of it must be obvious to all the world. Until the ministers have had time to show, that they had no hand in this; that some of their underlings were bribed to do it; I will not accuse them, or suppose them guilty, of an act of partiality so shockingly base; but, unless this be done by them, upon their heads the charge must finally fall, and, in the mean while we should be upon our guard, every man should endeavour to warn his neighbour, against the effect of that powerful and infamous influence which is now at work for the purpose of bringing Wellesley off in safety over the mangled reputations of the other commanders.

Botley, 22 Sept. 1808.

P. S. I have below, inserted, upon this subject, a letter, and an article from the *Times* newspaper, both which I beg to recommend to the perusal of my readers.

CONVENTIONS IN PORTUGAL.

SIR,—I cannot doubt that you, who have been so often the eulogist of British valour, and the assertor of British honour, and who have lately descanted with so much force and justice upon both, will open the pages of your Register to whoever shall wish to expose to public observation transactions by which the honour of our country is impaired, and the glory of her brave defenders tarnished. That this has happened by the Convention concluded by our commander in Portugal is, unfortunately, not a matter of doubtful surmise or hypothesis; it is a fact notorious to every class of the community; it is felt by every man throughout England, from the cabinet minister to the cottager; it is at this moment the subject of universal grief and indignant reprobation in all parts of this capital.—How is it, Sir, that mi-

nisters have been unable to infuse their own spirit, and the spirit of the nation at large, into the generals they employ?—Not a man amongst us doubted that Junot and his army would be brought prisoners to England; and we anticipated with a very pardonable, if not a laudable exultation, the arrival here, as captives, of some of Buonaparte's best troops commanded by his best generals. General Kellerman is the man to whom the honour of the victory at Marengo in a great measure belongs.—How did it happen that Sir A. Wellesley, on the very day after his memorable victory, when he was fully able to appreciate the relative means possessed by himself and his enemy, should agree “*that the French army should in no case be considered as prisoners of war, that they should be conducted back safe to France, and be left in undisturbed possession of what they call their private property?*”—Good God! Sir! Is the good old maxim, that one Englishman is a match for two Frenchmen, to be reversed? Or what was there to prevent 30,000 Britons from making half the number of Frenchmen surrender at discretion? The possession of the forts, the strong position at Cintra, the want of victuallers, cannot be listened to. Had the French army victuallers to attend them when they entered the country as enemies? Could not we, who were the friends and deliverers of the Portuguese, rely upon their assistance for a fortnight's or even a month's supply of provisions? At a time too when all the north of Portugal was open to us. Have the French armies had victuallers to attend them in their campaigns in Germany, Poland, and Dalmatia?—After the battle of the 21st we were, or we might have been, at the heels of the French army, with our bayonets in their loins; and, if properly pursued, even without the aid of cavalry, they would have had no time to take up or strengthen a position at Cintra. Junot knew this, and therefore endeavoured to stop us by negotiation. He has accomplished by address what he in vain attempted with the sword. Portugal was no longer his object: *that every bat man in his army knew must be lost*: but he wanted to save his troops, to keep unclipped the wings of the French eagles. He has succeeded, and in so doing he has pared the nails of the British lion. He has transferred to his own brow the laurels which his opponent has thus declared himself unworthy of. Indeed, he has done himself immortal honour, and our army has sustained a disgrace, which I only hope is not indelible. We admire CORNWALLIS for his masterly retreat with 5 sail of the line before

13; and shall we refuse our enemy the applause due to him for escaping from a situation ten times more critical? Buonaparte will not withhold his praise, and you will soon see these conventions held up to the world in the *Moniteur* amongst the most glorious trophies of the French army.—Our troops are now in possession of the forts of the Tagus;—ask our artillery and engineer officers what time it would have required to occupy them by force.—Were any thing wanting to Junot's triumph on this occasion, look at all the details of his stipulations; they contain demands which one should have thought no British officer would for a moment have listened to. If his garrisons march through Portugal, they are to be accompanied by British commissaries to provide for their subsistence. When they embark, all the horses are to be carefully embarked with them. Why, Sir, our commander has positively engaged to carry home a larger number of French horses, than were sent from England with Sir A. Wellesley's army, by whom these Frenchmen have been beaten: and whilst we are told, that that officer had no more cavalry with him, because horse transports are so scarce or so dear, and whilst we are actually prevented by these causes from sending out all the cavalry we wish for the future operations of the campaign, our general has most generously undertaken to convey to France 800 French horses.—But, it seems, our transports are not good enough for “*His excellency the French commander in chief, and the other principal officers of the French army.*” Our generals and officers may sail about the globe in West-Indiamen, or colliers; but Junot and his friends, forsooth, must be accommodated on board ships of war.—If they had been brought prisoners to England, this might have been a proper distinction, and the emblem on the admiral's bow would have felt complacency at the freight; but that his majesty's ships should be sent into an enemy's port to land an enemy's army, and to have it said there, that we brought them so far because we could not make that army prisoners, is really exposing the ships to a dishonour, and his majesty's officers to a degradation, which it is hardly in human nature to support.—Ask lord Mulgrave and lord St. Vincent, or any other lord of the admiralty, if our ships are fit for this sort of service.—It is a known fact, that many of our public ministers, representatives of his majesty, have been exposed to great inconvenience and even danger, for the want of this very accommodation which is to be obtained for General

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Junot; they have been told that packet-boats, or bye-boats, or fishing-boats, are good enough; nay, Sir, the conqueror of Maida, Sir John Stuart, with difficulty obtained for his accommodation a small brig of war, when he last went out to take the command of our army in Sicily: but M. Junot must pompously sail into Rochfort in a British 74. If there belongs a large portion of French insolence to the formation of this demand, there is in yielding to it a degree of pusillanimity, which, as an Englishman, I am altogether ashamed to characterise. — But, it is not only the Frenchmen, their horses, their arms and baggage, their 60 rounds of ammunition, that we are thus to take care of for them; — but *all* their private property, nothing of which can be taken away, must also be secured, landed on the coast of France, and, I suppose, insured at Lloyd's, at his majesty's expence, against the dangers of the seas: — a pretty employment this for British seamen!!! Except the sight of the Danes voluntarily and for money assisting us in fitting out their own ships last year at Copenhagen, I never, since I was born, heard of any thing so mean and so dastardly. — Junot may have squeezed any sum out of his duchy of *Abrantes*, his followers may have extorted with thumb-screws *moidores* or ingots of gold from the unfortunate Portuguese, his coffers may be full of the produce of that rapine and plunder which has been long since denounced, to the vengeance of indignant Europe, — YET ALL IS TO BE SACRED! The British seamen and soldiers, the conquerors of *Vimeira*, the deliverers of Portugal, are to aid and abet these most atrocious robberies. They are to make themselves accessories of the fact. They are to receive the stolen goods, and to convey them to a place of safety!!! — Either the French are or are not robbers and plunderers. If they are, Englishmen are now their accomplices. — What will our good friend and ally, the Prince Regent, say to all this? What will he say, when he learns, that we have not only thus prevented his subjects from recovering their stolen goods, insured an asylum and indemnity to the robbers, but that we have, in fact, wrested from him the sovereignty of his country? For, if this convention, this surrender of British honour, be fulfilled, his royal highness is not at liberty to call to account any one of his subjects who may have been foremost in giving aid and assistance to an invading enemy, and whose treachery may have afforded that enemy the means of prolonged resistance when attacked by the allies of his royal highness. — That these shameful terms were not extended to

secure a safe retreat to the Russian fleet, is due, not to the spirit of our military negotiation, but to the resistance of Sir Charles Cotton. The convention which he signed with the Russian admiral is second in impropriety only to that concluded with Junot; but at least he has not returned the enemy's ships to their country with 60 rounds of cartridges to each gun. — To have agreed to the conditions set forth in the 7th article of the armistice shews such an absence of judgment, of spirit, of common sense, that I really can hardly believe my eyes when I see Sir A. Wellesley's name put to it. — Whilst we are thus spontaneously, and without condition, giving up the whole French army, who ought to have been considered as our prisoners, what have we done for our friends the Spaniards? Look at the 18th article of the definitive convention. You will there find, that, in exchange for the Spanish troops detained on board ship in the port of Lisbon, which are thus *graciously* delivered to him, our commander-in-chief engages to obtain from the Spaniards a number of civil and military Frenchmen detained in Spain in consequence of certain occurrences in that country. If the British general receives a civil answer to his requisition on this head, it can only be in favour of the peculiar situation in which Spain now stands towards this country. At all events, he will be told, that before he again ventures to negotiate on military matters, he should take a lesson from Castanos. — I write, Mr. Cobbett, in some haste, and therefore can notice only cursorily these and other points that have excited my grief as well as my surprise. — The putting H. I. and R. My. Napoleon I. (whom this country has never officially acknowledged in that capacity) by the side of our most gracious sovereign; the leaving the French in possession of Lisbon till the embarkation of their second division; the engagement to interpret every doubt in favour of the French army; the whole tenour of the 16th article; the 20th, which relates to hostages; the impropriety of a lieutenant colonel of the army stipulating, without authority, for Sir C. Cotton, whose flag was flying at the main-mast head; all these things afford, in addition to what I have already said, ample and abundant matter for regret, and, as I think, for censure on those who acted for this country. They all bear the appearance of a beaten and despondent mind. If the French had been our conquerors, instead of *we* theirs, these articles could not have been worded more to their advantage. — But, I must not ask to occupy too much of your

present Register; perhaps I may hereafter return to the subject.—One topic only, but that a most important one, I will yet revert to. It seems that on this, as on other occasions, the public is to remain in doubt who is the author of so much mischief and calamity. One naturally looks to the commander-in-chief as the responsible person: in furtherance of this idea, Sir A. Wellesley's friends assert, that he had not only no share in framing the conditions, but that he even protested against them, and that he signed the armistice only at the positive and peremptory command of his superior officer. If he should hereafter be able to substantiate this assertion, it will absolve him from blame, whilst twofold vengeance will be called for on the head of Sir Hew Dalrymple. But, I own to you, I cannot believe this story; nor can I believe, until it is proved, that Sir H. Dalrymple is so empty, so vain, so self-conceited a character, as to have insisted upon such a measure, in opposition to Sir Arthur's advice. His own dispatch, and the armistice itself, contain internal evidence to the contrary. He could have assumed the command of the army but a very few hours before the armistice was signed; it *must* therefore have been done by the advice of his predecessors in command. On this point, however, the British public must and will have full and undisguised information.—Here, then, is a new, and I trust it will be an efficacious lesson, to our military and naval commanders, not to outstep the boundary of their functions. Since when is it that generals at the head of their armies, instead of fighting, are to make treaties, or conventions, and to convert themselves into diplomatic ministers, issuing full powers, which they do not themselves possess, to their subordinate officers? This right and power used to be reserved to the sovereign; and generals contented themselves with simply agreeing to or refusing the terms of capitulation proposed by their opponents.—I was in hopes that the capitulation of Copenhagen would have been a sufficient warning of the ill consequences of deviating from the old established rule; but I now confess that it requires more faith than I am master of to continue my confidence in that man as a negotiator (however meritorious he may be in other respects) who has set his name to, and been the prime mover in, two such unwarrantable transactions. Perhaps, if his Majesty's ministers had taken proper notice of the former of the two, they would not now be subject to the mortification of joining in the universal censure of the latter.—I am, Sir, your humble servant,—AN ENGLISHMAN.—*London, 19th Sept. 1808.*

CONVENTIONS IN PORTUGAL.—*From THE TIMES Newspaper, of the 19th Sept. 1808.*

The Convention of Lisbon still continues to make every tongue eloquent, and every heart bleed, in those parts of the island where the *Extraordinary Gazette* has found its way; and as we farther learn, throughout the army of Portugal, whose labours have terminated so unsuccessfully. The honour of the country has been sacrificed, its fairest hopes blasted, the reputation of its arms tarnished, the resources of the enemy increased and concentrated, the plunder of our allies sanctioned, the pride of our invincible navy insulted, and the feelings of our gallant seamen injured and corroded beyond expression. One can feel, therefore, but little inclination to laugh at the authors of such wrongs. Who can think, without tears of rage and bitterness, of an English fleet at this moment employed in carrying home a well appointed French army, along with their colours, arms, ammunition, baggage, and plunder, in order to unite in a fresh expedition against the liberties and honour of Spain? A curse, a deep curse, wring the heart and wither the hand, that were base enough to devise and execute this cruel injury on their country's peace and honour. But all the world is now calling out, who gave Dalrymple, and Burrard, and Cotton, their appointments? The country should have called out as loudly as we did, who gave Whitelocke his appointment? and then the occasion for clamouring now would have been removed—Dalrymple and Burrard would never have had their appointments. But why are these men to be singled out? They are not the only persons implicated in the mischief. Come forth, Sir Arthur Wellesley! You are the man who *first* signed, in the 5th article of your treaty, "that the French army should in no case be considered as prisoners of war" to the men who had the very day before conquered them: but, above all, you signed that article of an armistice, by which you agreed that an enemy's fleet should ride in safety in the Tagus, "after our army and fleet had obtained possession of the town and port of Lisbon!" Human credulity can hardly believe that any thing so monstrously injurious to your country could have entered into the heart of the basest of her sons, and still less into yours, which we believe to be proud and imperious enough. You might as well have signed, that Portsmouth and Plymouth should be neutral ports for an enemy's fleet to ride in. If the situation of your affairs had obliged you to stipulate for the safety of an enemy's army, what obliged you to pro-

509] wide for the security of an enemy's fleet? you might, without risk, have left that where you found it, and as you found it. For ten long months had it been blockaded in the Tagus; its escape, on all the principles of human calculation, was impossible; and, indeed, nothing short of two battles won by a British army, and one treaty signed by a British general, could at last have set it free. Be it then observed, while we are appreciating the disgraces of our naval and military negotiators, that Sir Charles Cotton has only sent the Russian seamen home—Sir Arthur Wellesley would have sent home both the men and their ships, and actually signed a treaty to that effect. Sir Hew Dalrymple consented that the French army should be liberated, but stipulated that it should be landed in the north of France; but Sir Arthur Wellesley agreed, without any such specification (art. 5), "that the French army" should in no case be considered as prisoners of war; that all those of whom it consists, should be conveyed to France, "with arms and baggage, and all their private property of every description, no part of which should be wrested from them." The final convention, therefore, is but built upon the provisional armistice, and is really restrictive of its most injurious stipulations. But chiefly, Sir Arthur Wellesley is the first man with a British uniform upon his back, that has put his signature to the bottom of a treaty, at the head of which stood the recognition of "his Imperial and Royal Majesty Napoleon I." What his Royal Majesty George III. may say to this, we know not; but we hope and trust it will be some bar to the admission of one whom we could mention, into the *Royal Party*, the *Family Council*, the *King's Friends*; and that those who have overturned thrones, and demolished potentates, in the eastern hemisphere, will at least be viewed with some jealousy, in their acknowledgement of regal and imperial titles, in the western, which their country does not acknowledge. Sir Arthur Wellesley having, therefore, sent home the French army, has now nothing left but to bring himself home, and meet the greeting aspect and kindly salutations of a country grateful for those favours of which his superiors in command were the immediate dispensers, but of which he was a distinguished participator.—Before we conclude, we shall say a few words on Sir Arthur Wellesley's appointment to this command. The public, it is true, thought better of his talents than they have been found to deserve. But those who elevated him to his situation had nearer opportunities of

observing, and ought to have estimated more justly the extent of his capacity, and the firmness of his mind. It is in vain, therefore, to say, that some part of his disgrace is not reflected on his patrons: and we are the more anxious that this should be understood, because we see the same influence, which has raised him, still exerted to protect him. Why was his preliminary treaty sent to the press in French only, as if, while he acknowledged the legality of his Napoleon's title, he had owned the pre-eminence of the language which the Corsican speaks? Why, but to circumscribe as much as possible the knowledge of his previous concessions, and to make it appear that Cotton had liberated the Russian seamen; that Cotton had sent them to man the Swedish flotilla which was captured at Sweabourg; that Dalrymple had sent home the French army, with all their baggage and ammunition, to join in the destruction of Spain; that Dalrymple had given them up their plunder? Whereas Wellesley's treaty stipulated all this, and moreover, that the chief port of a kingdom should be neutral towards its own enemies. When, therefore, the commanders of this wretched expedition are brought to their trial, let them meet with fair and impartial dealing; let not the proceedings of one of them be given to the public in a language which it does understand, while those of another are veiled in a tongue which it does not understand: such conduct is infamous. And, above all, let there be no procrastination in the punishment of delinquents who have grossly injured three kingdoms, England, Sweden, and Spain; and let us wipe off the imputation of treachery, under which we must most justly suffer with all our allies, if we do not take ample vengeance on those who have dared, by a shameful conventional arrangement, and, in defiance of their country's most solemn obligations, to assist Russia in manning her fleets against Sweden, and France in augmenting her forces against Spain.

CONVENTIONS IN PORTUGAL.—*From the London Gazette Extraordinary, Friday, Sept. 16.*

Downing Street, Sept. 16, 1808.—A dispatch, of which the following is a copy, was received yesterday evening from lieutenant-general Sir Hew Dalrymple, commanding his majesty's troops in Portugal, addressed to lord viscount Castlereagh, one of his majesty's principal secretaries of state, and brought by captain Dalrymple, military secretary to Sir Hew Dalrymple.

Head-Quarters Cintra, Sept. 3.—My

Lord, I have the honour to inform your lordship that I landed in Portugal, and took the command of the army, on Monday, the 22d of August, the next day after the battle of Vimiera, and where the enemy sustained a signal defeat, where the valour and discipline of British troops, and the talents of British officers, were eminently displayed.—A few hours after my arrival, gen. Kellermann came in with a flag of truce from the French general in chief, in order to propose an agreement for a cessation of hostilities, for the purpose of concluding a Convention for the evacuation of Portugal by the French troops. The inclosed contains the several Articles at first agreed upon and signed by Sir Arthur Wellesley and gen. Kellermann; but as this was done with a reference to the British admiral, who, when the agreement was communicated to him, objected to the 7th article, which had for its object the disposal of the Russian fleet in the Tagus, it was finally concluded that lieut.-col. Murray, quarter-master-general to the British army, and gen. Kellermann, should proceed to the discussion of the remaining articles, and finally to conclude a Convention for the evacuation of Portugal, subject to the ratification of the French general in chief, and the British commanders by sea and land.—After considerable discussion and repeated reference to me, which rendered it necessary for me to avail myself of the limited period latterly prescribed for the suspension of hostilities, in order to move the army forwards, and to place the several columns upon the routes by which they were to advance, the Convention was signed, and the ratification exchanged the 30th of last month.—That no time might be lost in obtaining anchorage for the transports and other shipping, which had for some days been exposed to great peril on this dangerous coast, and to insure the communication between the army and the victuallers, which was cut off by the badness of the weather and the surf upon the shore, I sent orders to the Buffs, and 42d regiments, which were on board of transports with Sir C. Cotton's fleet, to land and take possession of the forts on the Tagus whenever the admiral thought it proper to do so. This was accordingly carried into execution yesterday morning, when the forts of Cascais, St. Julien's, and Bugio were evacuated by the French troops, and taken possession of by ours.—As I landed in Portugal entirely unacquainted

with the actual state of the French army, and many circumstances of a local and incidental nature, which doubtless had great weight in deciding the question; my own opinion in favour of the expediency of expelling the French army from Portugal, by means of the Convention the late defeat had induced the French general in chief to solicit, instead of doing so by a continuation of hostilities, was principally founded on the great importance of time, which the season of the year rendered peculiarly valuable, and which the enemy could easily have consumed in the protracted defence of the strong places they occupied, had terms of convention been refused them.—When the suspension of arms was agreed upon, the army under the command of Sir John Moore had not arrived, and doubts were even entertained whether so large a body of men could be landed on an open and a dangerous beach; and that being effected, whether the supply of so large an army with provisions from the ships could be provided for, under all the disadvantages to which the shipping were exposed. During the negociation, the former difficulty was overcome by the activity, zeal, and intelligence, of capt. Malcolm, of the Donegal, and the officers and men under his orders; but the possibility of the latter seems to have been at an end, nearly at the moment when it was no longer necessary.—Capt. Dalrymple, of the 18th dragoons, my military secretary, will have the honour of delivering to your lordship this dispatch. He is fully informed of whatever has been done under my orders, relative to the service on which I have been employed, and can give any explanation thereupon that may be required. I have the honour to be, &c. (Signed) HEW DALRYMPLE, Lieut.-Gen.

Translation of the Articles for a Suspension of Arms in Portugal.

Suspension of arms agreed upon between lieut.-gen. Sir A. Wellesley, Knight of the Order of the Bath, on the one part, and M. Kellermann, general of division, grand officer of the legion of honour, commander of the order of the iron crown, grand cross of the Bavarian order of the lion, on the other part; both invested with full powers by the respective generals of the French and British armies, dated head-quarters of the British army, Aug. 22, 1808.

(To be continued.)